

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 064885
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-02 PA-02 USIE-00 /019 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:CEDAVIS/JLP
APPROVED BY S/AB:DPOPPER
ARA/PAN:JCHAAHR

-----103559 141701Z /45

O 141629Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 064885

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, PN

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE MARCH 14

FOR JORDEN FROM CHRISTOPHER

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE IN TODAY'S
WASHINGTON POST:

BEGIN QUOTE: PRESIDENT COURTS SENATE BLOC WITH OFFER ON
TREATY BY ROBERT G. KAISER, WASHINGTON POST STAFF WRITER.

"THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION YESTERDAY OFFERED A SUBSTANTIAL
CONCESSION ALLOWING A SIGNIFICANT NEW CHANGE TO THE PANAMA
CANAL TREATIES IN A LAST-MINUTE EFFORT TO WIN TWO-THIRDS
APPROVAL IN THE SENATE.

"HOWEVER, THE CONCESSION APPEARED TO FALL JUST SHORT OF THE
WISHES OF SEN. DENNIS DECONCINI (D-ARIZ.), WHO HAS EMERGED
AS A KEY BROKER BETWEEN UNDECIDED DEMOCRATIC SENATORS AND
THE ADMINISTRATION. LAST NIGHT, DECONCINI SAID HE WOULD
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 064885

ASK FOR MORE THAN HE WAS OFFERED YESTERDAY, AND IT WAS
NOT CLEAR HOW THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD REACT.

"SEVERAL KEY SENATE VOTES COULD DEPEND ON THE OUTCOME OF
DECONCINI'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION.

"DECONCINI WANTS TO ADD A RESERVATION OR AMENDMENTS TO

THE SENATE'S RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL OF THE FIRST TREATY-- SCHEDULED TO BE VOTED ON THURSDAY AFTERNOON--THAT WOULD GRANT THE UNITED STATES THE RIGHT TO TAKE UNILATERAL MILITARY ACTION, INCLUDING BASING TROOPS TEMPORARILY IN PANAMA, TO OPEN THE CANAL IF IT WERE CLOSED BECAUSE OF DOMESTIC STRIFE IN PANAMA OR PANAMA'S FAILURE TO MAINTAIN THE CANAL PROPERTY.

"YESTERDAY, HE SAID, THE ADMINISTRATION HAD AGREED TO ACCEPT SUCH A RESERVATION, PROVIDED IT DID NOT DIRECTLY SUGGEST AN AMERICAN RIGHT TO PUT TROOPS BACK INTO PANAMA ITSELF AFTER THE YEAR 2000. UNDER THE TREATY AS DRAFTED, PANAMA TAKES CONTROL OF THE CANAL IN THAT YEAR, AND AFTERWARDS, NO COUNTRY BUT PANAMA IS PERMITTED TO BASE TROOPS IN THE COUNTRY.

"BUT WHEN DECONCINI AND HIS STAFF GOT A CHANCE LATE YESTERDAY TO STUDY JUST WHAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAD APPROVED, THEY FOUND IT WAS NOT QUITE WHAT THEY HAD ASKED FOR. THEY THEN REDRAFTED THE PROPOSED RESERVATION, SPELLING OUT AMERICA'S RIGHT TO KEEP THE CANAL OPEN WITH WHATEVER STEPS ARE NECESSARY, "INCLUDING THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE IN PANAMA".

"THIS LAST PHRASE MIGHT WELL BE UNACCEPTABLE BOTH TO THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND TO GEN. OMAR TORRIJOS, THE
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 064885

LEADER OF PANAMA, AN AIDE TO DECONCINI ACKNOWLEDGED LAST NIGHT. FURTHER BARGAINING WAS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TODAY, WHEN SENATE DEBATE ON THE 'RESOLUTION OF RATIFICATION' IS DUE TO BEGIN.

"THE VERSION OF THE RESERVATION THAT THE ADMINISTRATION APPROVED EARLIER SAID THE UNITED STATES OR PANAMA "SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAKE SUCH STEPS AS IT DEEMS NECESSARY, INCLUDING THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES,, TO KEEP THE CANAL OPEN.

"EARLIER YESTERDAY DECONCINI PREDICTED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD DO WHAT IT HAD TO PLEASE HIM AND FOUR LIKE-MINDED COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER IN RECENT DAYS. 'IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO THE ADMINISTRATION THAT THEY'LL GIVE WHAT THEY HAVE TO,' HE SAID.

I GET THE FEELING THAT THEY DON'T HAVE THE VOTES", WITHOUT SATISFYING THIS BLOC OF UNDECIDED SENATORS, HE ADDED.

"BESIDES DECONCINI, THIS GROUP INCLUDES SENS. SAMNUNN AND HERMAN E. TALMADGE OF GEORGIA, WENDELL FORD (KY.)

AND RUSSELL B. LONG (LA.).

"DECONCINI AND HIS COLLEAGUES MET IN THE CAPITOL YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WITH WARREN M. CHRISTOPHER, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE, WHO TOLD THEM WHAT CHANGES THE ADMINISTRATION COULD ACCEPT, DECONCINI SAID.

"DECONCINI NOTED THAT UNTIL NOW THE ADMINISTRATION HAD TAKEN THE POSITION THAT A CHANGE AS SUBSTANTIAL AS THAT ENVISIONED IN HIS NEW PROPOSAL WOULD REQUIRE ANOTHER PLEBISCITE IN PANAMA, AND WOULD THEREFORE BE UNACCEPTABLE. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE NEW ADMINISTRATION ATTITUDE REFLECTS A MORE SOBER VIEW OF THE TREATIES' PROSPECTS IN THE SENATE.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 064885

"IN FACT, DESPITE NUMEROUS FAVORABLE SIGNS IN RECENT WEEKS, THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE SENATE LEADERSHIP HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO WIN FIRM COMMITMENTS FROM THE 67 SENATORS THEY NEED, ASSUMING ALL 100 VOTE. TREATY BACKERS EXPECTED THE LONG DEBATE TO PRODUCE MORE CONVERTS TO THE TREATIES THAN IT HAS, AND NO PRO-TREATY MOMENTUM EVER DEVELOPED.

"IF THE ADMINISTRATION'S BARGAINING WITH THE FIVE UNDECIDED DEMOCRATS SUCCEEDS IN WINNING ALL THEIR VOTES FOR FINAL PASSAGE, WHITE HOUSE LOBBYISTS FEEL CONFIDENT THE FIRST TREATY WILL PASS WITH 67 OR MORE VOTES ON THURSDAY. THE WHITE HOUSE HAS ALREADY ACCEPTED ANOTHER CHANGE THE FIVE PROPOSED.

"THAT OTHER CHANGE WILL ALSO BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL LEAVING OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT U.S. TROOPS COULD BE BASED IN PANAMA AFTER THE YEAR 2000, PROVIDED BOTH COUNTRIES AGREE.

"IN FLOOR ACTION YESTERDAY THE SENATE APPROVED THE SECOND OF TWO 'LEADERSHIP AMENDMENTS' TO THE BODY OF THE FIRST TREATY--THE 'NEUTRALITY TREATY'--BY A VOTE OF 85 TO 3. THIS AMENDMENT ADDS LANGUAGE STATING THAT 'IN CASE OF NEED OR EMERGENCY' U.S. WARSHIPS WILL HAVE THE RIGHT 'TO GO TO THE HEAD OF THE LINE' TO PASS EXPEDITIOUSLY THROUGH THE CANAL.

"OTHER AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY TREATY OPPONENTS WERE ALL DEFEATED.

"ONE OPPONENT, SEN. TED STEVENS (R-ALASKA), SAID YESTERDAY HE THOUGHT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS THE VOTES TO WIN APPROVAL OF THE FIRST TREATY THURSDAY.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 064885

"ASKED ABOUT THIS AT THE WHITE HOUSE, PRESS SECRETARY
JODY POWELL SAID, 'I HOPE HE'S RIGHT'. ADDED POWELL,
'I THINK NEITHER SIDE HAS THE VOTES LOCKED UP.'

UNQUOTE. VANCE

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, TREATY SIGNATURE, CANALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE064885
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: CEDAVIS/JLP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780113-0583
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780370/aaaacgyt.tel
Line Count: 181
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3b156ec7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3336899
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE MARCH 14 FOR JORDEN FROM CHRISTOPHER
TAGS: PBOR, SOPN, EWWT, PGOV, PN, US
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3b156ec7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014